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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 ACDA-12 EB-08 OMB-01 TRSE-00
OES-07 DLOS-09 /119 W
----------001948 160037Z /63
R 151533Z NOV 77
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3155
INFO AMEMBASSY VALLETTA
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 19020

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, MR, GW, IT, FR
SUBJECT: GENSCHER'S VISIT TO MALTA

REFS: (A) VALLETTA 1243, (B) VALLETTA 1163

SUMMARY: THE FOREIGN OFFICE DOES NOT EXPECT ANY NOTABLE RESULTS TO EMERGE FROM GENSCHER'S BRIEF VISIT TO MALTA ON NOVEMBER 18. GENSCHER WILL PROD MINTOFF TOWARD MAKING CONSTRUCTIVE SUGGESTIONS WHICH MIGHT BRING ABOUT A RESUMPTION OF THE FRENCH-ITALIAN-MALTESE TALKS. DESPITE EXPECTED PRESSURE FROM MINTOFF FOR DIRECT GERMAN FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE, GENSCHER WILL STRESS THAT THE FRG'S ROLE IN POST-79 ARRANGEMENTS MUST REMAIN MULTILATERAL. END SUMMARY.

1. FRG FOREIGN MINISTER GENSCHER WILL ARRIVE IN MALTA
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THE AFTERNOON OF NOVEMBER 18 AND DEPART THE FOLLOWING MORNING. TWO MEETINGS WITH MINTOFF ARE PLANNED. THE PRINCIPAL TOPICS ARE EXPECTED TO BE THE EUROPEAN DIALOGUE WITH MALTA AND VALLETTA'S EFFORTS TO MAKE MALTA THE SEAT OF A POSSIBLE INTERNATIONAL SEABED AUTHORITY FOR LOS DEEP SEABED MINING.

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2. EUROPEAN DIALOGUE: GENSCHER WOULD LIKE TO SEE A RESUMPTION OF THE FRENCH-ITALIAN-MALTESE TALKS. DURING THEIR MEETING IN MUNICH SEPTEMBER 23 TO 25 AND IN HIS LETTER OF EARLY OCTOBER, GENSCHER TOLD MINTOFF HE WOULD TALK TO THE FRENCH AND ITALIANS IN AN EFFORT TO ACHIEVE MOVEMENT IN THEIR STALLED DIALOGUE WITH MALTA. HE ALSO TOLD MINTOFF THE FRG WAS PREPARED, IN PRINCIPLE, TO PARTICIPATE IN MULTILATERAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO MALTA IF: (A) OTHER WESTERN NATIONS AND (B) THE ARABS SIMILARLY PARTICIPATED (EACH GROUP WOULD BE REQUIRED TO MAKE APPROXIMATELY EQUAL CONTRIBUTIONS) AND IF (C) THE FORM OF MALTESE NEUTRALITY WAS ACCEPTABLE TO THE FRG. GENSCHER PLANS TO RECONFIRM THE FOREGOING POSITION AND ALSO TO URGE MINTOFF TO MAKE REASONABLE SUGGESTIONS DESIGNED TO RESUME THE DIALOGUE.

3. OUR FOREIGN OFFICE SOURCE (DIRECTOR OF MEDITERRANEAN AFFAIRS HEIBACH) ANTICIPATED SOME DIFFICULTY IN WORKING OUT SATISFACTORY ECONOMIC ARRANGEMENTS. HE BELIEVED THE SITUATION WAS BOTH COMPLEX AND CONFUSED. THE FOREIGN OFFICE WAS, HOWEVER, ANXIOUS TO ACHIEVE A PACKAGE WHICH MIGHT KEEP THE SOVIETS OUT, WHILE NOT BOWING TO MINTOFF'S "BLACKMAIL". HE STRESSED THAT THE FRG COULD NOT GIVE MALTA A GUARANTEE OF ITS EXISTENCE.

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4. HEIBACH SAID MINTOFF WAS PRESSING THE FRG TO REPLACE FRANCE AND ITALY AS MALTA'S PRIMARY AID DONOR IN THE POST-1979 PERIOD. MINTOFF APPARENTLY BELIEVED HE COULD WIN GREATER CONCESSIONS FROM THE "RICH GERMANS." THE FRG, FOR ITS PART, BELIEVED THE MALTESE SITUATION WAS FUNDAMENTALLY A MEDITERRANEAN PROBLEM AND THAT PARIS AND ROME SHOULD CONTINUE TO PLAY THE KEY ROLES. BONN WAS PREPARED TO ASSIST IN A MULTI-LATERAL FRAMEWORK BUT NOT BILATERALLY.

5. THE FOREIGN OFFICE EXPECTS MINTOFF TO PRESS FOR GERMAN SUPPORT FOR MALTA AS THE VENUE OF A FUTURE INTERNATIONAL SEABED AUTHORITY. GENSCHER WILL TELL HIM THAT MALTA IS ONE OF A NUMBER OF COMPETING COUNTRIES, THAT THE FRG HAS NOT YET TAKEN A POSITION AND WILL NOT DO SO UNTIL THE LOS CONFERENCE IS CONCLUDED, BUT THAT BONN HAS NO OBJECTION IN PRINCIPLE TO SUPPORTING MALTA.
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